



Ebenezer
CHILD CARE FROM THE HEART

Parenting Tip: Avoiding Restaurant Nightmares

Ask almost any new parent and most would agree that one of the things they miss from their days without children is the opportunity to go out for a nice, relaxing meal.

According to Beverly Anderson, Executive Director of Ebenezer Child Care Centers with locations in Milwaukee, Mequon, Greenfield, Oak Creek, and Wauwatosa, "Having children doesn't mean the end of dining out. It simply requires a little planning ahead, so your dining experience will be a pleasant versus a stressful one."

Anderson recommends a few basic tips to help you enjoy dining out again.

Choose With Caution

Anderson says that, when you're dining out, be sure to select a restaurant that is child-friendly. This means making sure it has highchairs, booster seats, a kid's menu, and ideally an activity for children to work on while they wait for their food.

She says that, before going to any restaurant, you should think about how long it will take to be seated and whether the setting is too formal for family dining. You should also be sensitive to a restaurant's surroundings. If it is too noisy or crowded, either of these situations could cause problems for your children.

Another tip that Anderson recommends is avoiding restaurants at primetime eating hours. By doing so, you will find the restaurant less hectic and generally more child-friendly. Another useful idea to consider is calling ahead to place your order and reduce the time you have to wait for your food to arrive at your table.

Always Be Prepared

Keeping children happy while they wait for their food at a restaurant can be a real challenge. Anderson recommends bringing small toys and books that will help pass the time.

If your child is a newborn, try to schedule your meal during a nap, so he/she can sleep in a portable car seat at your table. For older children, iPads or good old coloring and activity books also work well.

Anderson adds that making sure your children will be comfortable during mealtime can also help ensure a pleasant dining experience for everyone. She recommends bringing a portable highchair, if necessary, and sippy cups and child-size utensils if your children are beyond using their fingers.

Childproof Your Table

Anderson points out that when your children get to the age where they are reaching for objects, you need to be aware of items on the table that are sharp or can spill easily.

She recommends removing forks, knives, creamer, and other things that are accidents waiting to happen until you need them.

Ebenezer Child Care Centers, Inc. will be hosting a **FREE Family Fun Night** on **"Avoiding Restaurant Nightmares"** on **Wednesday, May 15, from 5:00-6:30 p.m.** at their southside Milwaukee center located at 1496 South 29th Street. Eating at a restaurant can be a fun thing to do with your family, but when your children misbehave, what started as a pleasant evening turns into a nightmare. Come to our May Family Fun Night and get tips on how to make dining at a restaurant a more enjoyable experience as you visit our dramatic play area "restaurant," create paper plate meals in the art area, and put together food puzzles. In addition to the activities, you will have the opportunity to enjoy dinner on us! Registration is required. Please call 414-643-5070 to register.